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NSC BRIEFING

2 August 1955

MALAYA AND SINGAPORE

I. In the UK's major Asiatic enclave (the "protected" Malay States and the Crown Colony of Singapore), popularly-elected leaders are demanding both greatly accelerated progress toward the admitted eventual [REDACTED] goal of self-government and an end to the seven-year state of "emergency" (imposed

25X6A

25X6 [REDACTED] in the battle against Communist terrorism).

A. At present, despite limited concessions, [REDACTED] control the area's defenses, foreign affairs and finance, and [REDACTED]

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25X6 [REDACTED] hold absolute veto over all other affairs.

B. Newly elected local leaders are not expected to attempt a forceable overthrow [REDACTED], but instead they depend on local political pressures to bring a speed-up of [REDACTED]

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25X6

C. However, this "gradualist" attitude of local leaders, particularly in Singapore, opens the door for continued agitation by "impatient" Communist-controlled labor and student groups (as in May and June 55 riots).

II. Federation of Malaya's first national elections (27 July) resulted in landslide victory (51 of 52 seats at stake) for triple-party "Alliance" (representing Malay, Chinese, and Indian communities) which campaigned on platform of self-government, amnesty to Communists, and racial harmony.

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
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A. Having won election, Alliance leaders have already given indications they are shifting to more moderate stands than those taken in heat of campaign oratory.

1. "Alliance" leader, Abdul Rahman (brother of Sultan of Perak), has proposed a special commission to study constitutional reforms necessary before taking definite action on self-government.

2. He is already demanding, however, [REDACTED] 25X6

25X6 [REDACTED] in two years and if possible in one year.

3. All political parties in Malaya have made 1960 the target-year for complete self-government.

25X6 4. [REDACTED] so far have mentioned no date.

III. On issue of ending "emergency", Rahman announced post-election that "Alliance" would not support offer of amnesty to Communists except at right time, and then only with advice of "experts" (i.e., [REDACTED]) 25X6

A. As one such "expert", Rahman named [REDACTED] -25X6

[REDACTED] 25X6

B. As part of political give-and-take between [REDACTED] 25X6
25X6A and local leaders, [REDACTED] will let Rahman, as "Alliance" leader, announce liberalized surrender terms for terrorists in near future.

IV. In Singapore, Chief Minister David Marshall (elected Apr 55 under new constitution) threatened in late July to resign unless his demand for immediate self-government was met.

- A. However, arrival [REDACTED] 25X6
in Singapore on 30 July has brought moderate turn of events.
- B. Following conversations, Marshall soft-pedaled resignation threat, said "solution to crisis appears to be in view."
- C. Marshall (Singapore-born son of Iraqi Jewish family and famed criminal lawyer) has been under pressure from "Activist" Communist-manipulated opposition organization-- People's Action Party.
- D. Apparently felt self-government demand necessary to preserve his own popular appeal.

25X6 E. [REDACTED] in turn, want to prevent Marshall's resignation, since new elections could increase People's Action Party strength.

V. Meanwhile, Communists are continuing "selective terrorism" campaign in Malaya, are being increasingly successful in infiltration and subversion both in Malaya and in Singapore.

A. Special targets (and hence chief successes) are Chinese schools, labor unions, volunteer guard units and Chinese villages.

25X6 B. [REDACTED] view Communist bids for peaceful settlement (in June and July 55) as effort to regain status of legalized political party, thus accelerate already dangerous subversion campaign.

25X6 VI. [REDACTED] affect an attitude of calm over progress of affairs in Malaya and Singapore.

- A. Say they are aware that granting of limited self-government, and encouragement of its continuing development, constitute "calculated risk" but feel course is only alternative to violent revolutionary development.**
- B. Emphasize future of area depends on such imponderables as world rubber market and future Communist activities elsewhere in Southeast Asia.**
- C. US observers in area, however, have emphasized more pessimistic aspects of situation.**

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- 1. ConGen Singapore believes subversion further advanced in both Malaya and Singapore than [REDACTED] care to admit.**
- 2. Foresees possibility of [REDACTED] self-government, return to direct [REDACTED].**

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